

Business Office...Times-Dispatch Building
19 South Tenth Street
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By MAIL One Sh. Three One
postAGE PAID Year. Mon. Tues. Wed.
Daily with Sunday.....160 150 140 130
Daily without Sunday.....150 130 120 110
Sunday edition only.....150 130 120 110

By Times-Dispatch Carrier Delivery Service
in Richmond and suburbs and Peters-
burg.....One Week
Daily with Sunday.....15 cents
Daily without Sunday.....10 cents
Sunday only.....5 cents

Entered January 25, 1905, at Richmond, Va.,
as second-class matter under act of Congress
at March 3, 1893.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1913.

A TASK FOR A GIANT.

Colonel W. C. Gorgas has found a
worth task in his effort to stamp out
pneumonia in the band, whither he is
now going on special leave from the
Canal Zone.

He has been requested to battle with
a situation which has defeated the
best efforts of England's most trained
sanitarians and he will discover in
the mining district around Johannes-
burg conditions unlike those in Panama.
A large area, sixty miles in
length, is doomed with ignorant negro
miners living under the most insanitary
conditions and dying by hun-
dreds of pneumonia.

But Gorgas has had experience with
this great plague and can reduce its
ravages if there be any one in the
world capable of doing so. When he
began his work on the Canal Zone, as
our readers may remember, pneumonia
was one of his most serious prob-
lems. The negroes who were brought
from the West Indies contracted from
the white auto influenza, to which
none were immune, and they developed
pneumonia as a sequela.

But Gorgas scattered them along the
railroad segregated the newcomers,
and we observe from his reports was
able to reduce the number of deaths
from 160 in the fiscal year 1906-07, to
six in the year 1911-12. The greatness
of this triumph can only be appreciated
when it is remembered that in
the registration area of the United
States the death rate from pneumonia
is still 113.7 per 100,000 of population.

THE PHILHARMONIC SEASON.

It is a very delightful thing to record that the Richmond Philharmonic Society has progressed to that touchstone of orchestras—the playing of a Beethoven Symphony. Wholly, the Philharmonic has not undertaken any very long or complex work, but the First symphony is full of the beauty and melody that have made the Fifth and Ninth dear to music-lovers. This and the other selections for the opening program offer variety, lightness and modernity to the cultured musician and plain person who just enjoys music. The program is not too ambitious, nor is it merely popular. It represents another step upward in the musical education, both of the orchestra and its admirers.

The five concerts of the Philharmonic this year promise splendid things. The quality of music to be given will be better than ever before, and the quality of the actual playing will attain a higher excellence. Better orchestral technique and better artistry in interpretation are assured by the efforts of those who labor for melody in strings and brasses. The membership reaches nearly fifty this season, and the addition of instruments that have been heretofore lacking insures a greater volume and a more texture of music. The fact that the strings have met each week for special rehearsals in addition to the full meeting each Monday is admirable proof of how seriously the Philharmonic takes its labor of love. Such carefulness and such sincere effort have added to the power of the orchestra adequately to voice the full value of the composer's ideal.

The Times-Dispatch has often pointed out the splendid work done by these amateurs in bringing good music within the reach of the people. Music should not be a rare and costly decoration of life. It should be woven into the community living, and best of all it should be played by those who are of the community. That this fine ideal may be achieved, the orchestra must find support. We are glad to learn that the Philharmonic Society has been that the regular carriers have been able to deliver about 11,000 of the 20,000 packages received in two weeks. This achievement will not be possible as the average weight of packages increases. Yet it shows why the government should be able to handle the small parcel business of the nation much more cheaply than can a private company, whose distribution system is not already perfected for the handling of small matter.

It is declared by the local express representatives that the express business has also shown an increase during the year. If this be true, the parcel post system is serving the people without taking the living from the private companies. The successful operation of both systems should give us the cheapest and best parcel delivery in the world.

IS LONG LIFE HEREDITARY?

Massachusetts is congratulating itself upon the residence within its borders of five sisters whose combined ages are 458 years. As the father of these good women lived to ninety-five, they are held as models of what life in the Bay State will do. "The Smith family," we are told by The Boston Globe, which prints the picture of the five sisters, "is noted for its longevity."

But is any family noted for its long life? Is longevity hereditary? Familiar facts would seem to dispute what has become a favorite maxim among the people. The late Manuel Garcia, long the world's most famous "old man," died in 1906 at the mature age of 101 years, but his father, like him, a renowned music teacher, died when he was but forty-seven, and his sister, the noted Mallahan, died before she was thirty.

In the same way Michael Angelo, instanced as a proof that man means long life, reached eighty-nine years of age, but most of his family died young. Nor did Thomas Fair, the famous Shropshire peasant, reputed to have died at 102 years, have a single kinsman who lived beyond the normal span of life.

Scientists have never been able to trace longevity as a family characteristic and have long since looked elsewhere for an explanation of an unusual duration of life.

Buffon, as our readers will recall, thought he had the secret when he decided that the life of the average man was from six to seven times the length of his years of physical growth. But neither Flourens, who tried to enlarge Buffon's theory, Otaletti nor Bungs, who fashioned new ratios, were able to prove their case.

If there be any rule for longevity, it is not improbable that Metchnikoff had discovered its fundamentals. Reasoning from the rapid death of those animals with weak digestive organs, this great scientist has concluded that death from "old age" is death from auto-intoxication.

Edison's automatic telegraph, his quadruped invented in 1876, and Rowland's multiple sending-instrument are but a few of the inventions in telegraphy that have been aired in court.

In fact, Edison's suit against Jay Gould, involving the automatic telegraph and begun in 1872, is said still to be in the courts. And if these do not illustrate the tangle of our patent laws, the incandescent light and the gas-engine suits finish the story.

His long experience has embittered Mr. Edison and has given him a very positive if not a very favorable idea of our judicial system. Discussing his suit recently he said:

"There is no justice in law. It has resolved itself into technicalities and formulas. A case will be thrown out of one court and carried to another, it will be sent back on writs and ad-
vised to the court to send back and forth more for the sake of legal procedure than for the administration of justice. Where an important case might be settled in a short time by the use of common sense, it is prolonged through the technicalities of jurisprudence the whole course of which defies the object sought."

But there is another view of the matter. The patent snarl and scratch, but they take good care to keep the scenes. One may burden the genius of another and deny him profits to which he is entitled, but both will unite to place the heaviest possible royalty on the patented article and to make the user pay. Such a case as that of Sidney Henry et al. vs. A. B. Dick Company will ever remain a monument to the amazing vagaries of American law.

The whole system needs reformation not only to protect the rightful owner of a patent, but to protect the public who use it.

Old Dan Tucker came late for his supper, but it appears from late bulletins that the Hon. John Randolph has not missed the boat.

This brisk weather that puts lots of heat in the boys ought to mean some real football instead of this pink tea on the lawn game.

West Point is now on the main-light between Richmond and Atlanta. It's the place you get the real oysters and crab.

Mrs. Pankhurst is "it," and her backers seem to be "out."

One good thing about moving-picture productions of standard novels like "The Last Days of Pompeii" is that lots of people are inspired to read good books they might otherwise never hear of.

Can "Pop" Wiley bring up the "pure food baby" without a little pure sparkling?

What Congress needs is a frank cap.

THE SUCCESS OF THE PARCEL POST.

The parcel post is certainly a success in Richmond, and, we judge, over the entire country. The figures presented by a careful record of the parcel post business of the local office for the first fifteen days of October show period, 57,781 parcels were handled. This means that in one month some 115,000 parcels are dispatched or received here, or one for almost every inhabitant of Richmond. The weight of the parcels received in the test period was 52,903 pounds. This means that the average weight has increased almost one pound since January, when similar figures were prepared. We see no reason why this average should not increase steadily until the government reaches its full usefulness as a distributor for the people.

The cost of postage was \$16,130, or \$1.6130 went for salaries of clerks made necessary by the increased business. It should be a source of pride to Richmond and its postal force to know that the parcel post business is conducted here as economically as anywhere in the country. So marked has been the success of the Richmond office in handling the new matter that it has become a model for other cities. Postmasters are sent here to learn the best methods of meeting parcel post demands.

One striking element in this economy has been that the regular carriers have been able to deliver about 11,000 of the 20,000 packages received in two weeks. This achievement will not be possible as the average weight of packages increases. Yet it shows why the government should be able to handle the small parcel business of the nation much more cheaply than can a private company, whose distribution system is not already perfected for the handling of small matter.

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THE PENALTY OF GENIUS.

The recent compromise of a patent suit, whereby an American trust paid \$10,000 in settlement for an infringement of the ideas of another company, has renewed the perennial denunciation of our patent laws.

While the suit in question is said to have involved the largest sum ever paid in patent litigation, it was by no means as spectacular, or, indeed, as exasperating as some of the suits of recent years.

Thomas A. Edison is probably the man on whose genius foolish patent laws have imposed the heaviest penalty, and the story of his lengthy litigation is of itself an indictment of our patent laws. One patent, for instance, Mr. Edison could not have registered in Germany because some busy-body found in a collection of Egyptian archaeology, of 2,000 years before Christ, a somewhat similar device. On another occasion, Mr. Edison had to defend his title to an invention, through every court in the land, and proved in the end that the machine he was alleged to have copied was made from his own model and had been carefully custed to give it the appearance of age.

About the telegraph, the telephone and the phonograph the patent war has raged. Practically every improvement has been contested and every new idea disputed. Edison's automatic telegraph, his quadruped invented in 1876, and Rowland's multiple sending-instrument are but a few of the inventions in telegraphy that have been aired in court.

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ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT.

By ROY K. MOUTON.

Love.
If somebody loves you,
You cannot be sure.
You cause for rejoicing,
You cause to be glad.
If you're a fool for some
As you journey on your way,
If somebody loves you,
You ought to be gay.

If somebody loves you,
You're bound to get gay
And blow in the cash
In a wild, wild, wild way.
If somebody loves you,
You'll part from your self
And make quite an all-around
Fool of yourself.

If somebody loves you,
You'll write foolish notes
In the language
Upon which she loves you.
She'll say them and sue you
And ween you by force,
The jury will find for
The plaintiff on course.

New York Notes.
A gentleman who had his show in a
subway train for nearly an hour on a
subway train the other evening told me
that he always tries to ride in
the subway and is quite used to it.
There is a certain monotony in the
scenery along the subway, especially
when one has to look for a place to
sit down for an hour or two.

There are several different kinds
of trains running on the same track, and even if you don't
care where you go you are more than
apt to get on the wrong train.

The subway is a great place for a
visitor to get a good New York
atmosphere, for it is there
bunched. It is often so thick that
the passengers difficulty in jamming
their way through. At the station
you get the time the train gets to
the terminal, and you are
met by fifteen persons and forty
men.

Strong on History.
There are names and names, and the
writer who has traveled some among
the Indians, has heard some peculiar
ones. One Indian who stopped at
a bar and asked for a glass of water
told him better than to ask for water.
We knew better, for Indians can't buy it.
A Indian girl, he said, can't buy it.
A Indian boy, he said, can't buy it.
A Indian man, he said, can't buy it.
A Indian woman, he said, can't buy it.
A Indian child, he said, can't buy it.
A Indian dog, he said, can't buy it.

How to Get Rich Quick.

Becomes the proprietor of an automobile garage, a butcher shop, and weigh your hand with the scales, and

Sell shares of stock in a hole in the ground out West.

Mail a 5-cent cigar that is fit to smoke.

Invent some gaudious substitute

and sell it to Rockefeller.

Voice of the People

When We Go Home.

No more aching heart, dear love, no

sighs, no backward glances in the

No different ways to tread, no sad

good-byes.

To part us, love, when we go home

at last.

The tears we weep shall all be wiped

away.

The cross beneath which our souls so

off now down.

The road to love, bathed in promise

is gone.

Shall blossom at His touch into a

crown.

The anguish now we cannot under-

stand.